

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01

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R 161456Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4882

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4026

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, EG, IS, US

SUBJECT: SYRIAN REACTION TO SINAI AGREEMENT - OCT. 15-16

1. DOMESTIC

OCT. 14 EVENING TV NEWS REPORTED PRES. ASAD RECEIVED KUWAITI EDITOR AL-RAI AL-AAM. DISCUSSIONS CENTERED AROUND "NEGATIVE SITUATION FOLLOWING SINAI AGREEMENT."

PRIMIN AYYUBI MET OCT. 14 WITH REGIONAL GOVERNORS TO REVIEW POLITICAL SITUATION IN WAKE OF AGREEMENT.

BAATH PARTY CONTINUES TO RECEIVE CABLES OF SUPPORT FOR ITS OPPOSITION TO AGREEMENT.

ALEPPO BRANCH OF BAATH PARTY HELD RALLY OCT. 15 TO CELEBRATE OCT. WAR VICTORY AND DENOUNCE AGREEMENT.

2. FOREIGN

REPORTS ON SYRIAN REFUSAL TO ATTEND CAIRO CONFERENCE RELATED SYRIAN POSITION IN PART TO BELIEF THAT CONFERENCE WOULD DISTRACT ARAB ATTENTION FROM "DEFEATIST AGREEMENT."

JORDANIAN MININFO ABU ZAYD IN STATEMENT TO SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY OCT. 14 OBLIQUELY CRITICIZED AGREEMENT BY REFERRING UNCLASSIFIED

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TO "VIOLENT SHOCK" TO WHICH ARAB NATION BEING SUBJECTED AND

WHICH HAD DISRUPTED AND DISINTEGRATED" OCT. VICTORY.

DEPFONMIN RIFAI STATED TO MILANESE JOURNAL THAT SYRIA REFUSES TO CONCLUDE ACCORD SIMILAR TO SINAI AGREEMENT. HE CHARACTERIZED U.S. POLICY AS AIMED AT ASSISTING ISRAEL IN ALL FIELDS.

SYRIAN MEDIA REPORT THAT JORDANIAN AND KUWAITI PAPERS CONTINUE TO DEPLORE AGREEMENT.

OCT. 16 PRESS HIGHLIGHTED SADAT DECISION TO RELIEVE FORMER AL-AHRAM EDITOR HAYKAL OF HIS POSITION AS PRESS ADVISOR. PRESS REPRINTED VARIOUS ARTICLES RECENTLY PUBLISHED BY HAYKAL IN ARAB PRESS INCLUDING ONE FROM BEIRUT AL-ANWAR IN WHICH EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP CRITICIZED FOR NOT OBTAINING PLEDGE OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM GOLAN FOLLOWING SINAI AGREEMENT.

SANA RELEASED DENIAL BY AHMAD AL-HAFIAN, MEMBER OF FAR, THAT SYRIANS INVOLVED IN DISTRIBUTING PAMPHLETS CRITICAL OF SADAT.

PRESS PUBLISHED DISPATCHES SPECULATING ON AGREEMENTS WHICH SADAT MIGHT SIGN WHILE IN U.S. AND TERMED THEM PAYMENT OBTAINED BY EGYPT FOR SIGNING "TRAITOROUS AGREEMENT." ADDED THESE AGREEMENTS PART OF EGYPTIAN-AMERICAN ATTEMPT TO REPLACE BEIRUT WITH CAIRO AS TRADE AND FINANCIAL CENTER.

OCT. 15 AL-THAWRAH REPORTED THAT ISRAELI AND AMERICAN MEDIA CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AGREEMENT.

3. COMMENTARY

OCT. 16 MEDIA REPORTED PRESS CONFERENCE BY AF MAJ. GEN. NAJI JAMIL ON EVE OF 29TH ANNIVERSARY OF SYRIAN AIR FORCE IN WHICH HE CRITICIZED EGYPTIANS FOR "SQUANDERING ARAB RIGHTS BY SIGNING SINAI AGREEMENT." HE ADDED THAT AMERICAN DECISION TO SEND HUGH AMOUNTS OF MILITARY SUPPLIES TO ISRAEL AS RESULT OF AGREEMENT NECESSITATED SYRIAN VIGILANCE.

DAMASCUS RADIO COMMENTARY EVENING OCT. 13 CASTIGATED SADAT FOR CONSIDERING MILITARY AND FINANCIAL AID FROM U.S. WHEN "SADAT KNOWS THAT MONEY U.S. PLUNDERED FROM ARAB HOMELAND HAS BEEN CONVERTED INTO MISSILES, PLANES AND BOMBS FOR ISRAEL THAT HAVE DESTROYED OUR CITIES AND KILLED OUR CHILDREN."

COLUMNIST IN OCT. 15 AL-BAATH QUOTED SECRETARY KISSINGER AS STATING THAT AGREEMENT IS MOST COMPREHENSIVE DOCUMENT ACQUIRED BY ISRAEL SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT AND IS VERY IMPORTANT
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POLITICAL "AGREEMENT." WRITER ADDED THAT AMERICAN DIPLOMACY, WHICH MET SUCCESS ON EGYPTIAN FRONT, NOW WAS MEETING FAILURE ON SYRIAN FRONT. HE URGED " MOBILIZATION OF ARAB ENERGIES THROUGH UNIFIED SYRIA-PALESTINIAN POSITION."

OCT. 14 TISHRIIN COLUMNIST CALLED FOR GREATER SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN COORDINATION TO RESIST DANGERS RESULTING FROM AGREEMENT.

OCT. 15 AL-BAATH WRITER DOWNPLAYED SIGNIFICANCE OF

POTENTIAL U.S.-EGYPTIAN ARMS DEAL, CLAIMING THAT AMERICAN ARMS WOULD NOT TIP BALANCE AGAINST ISRAEL AND MIGHT EVEN DEVELOP INTO "ANOTHER LINK IN CHAIN WHICH RESTRICTS EGYPTIAN MOVEMENT."

AL-THAWRAH COLUMNIST STRESSED DRAWBACKS OF AGREEMENT AND OPINED THAT BEST COURSE FOR EGYPT AND ARABS IS TO ABROGATE AGREEMENT "TO PREVENT ISSUE FROM BECOMING MORE COMPLICATED AND CAUSING NEW EXPLOSION IN REGION."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PEACE OBSERVATION MISSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975DAMASC04026
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750359-0921
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751048/aaaabqpm.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 NOV 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 NOV 2003 by MaustMC>; APPROVED <20 JAN 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIAN REACTION TO SINAI AGREEMENT - OCT. 15-16
TAGS: PFOR, SY, EG, IS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006